A short Treatise

Of the

CHURCH Mmilitant

UNDER

EPISCOPAL GOVERNMENT.

Written and dedicated to the *French* KING by the excellent Pen of

NICOLAS CAUSSIN.

Newly translated by *C. M.* a well-wisher to all those that are straying out of the Right Way.

ANNO 1661.

Vet.A3.g.68

the old saying truth
purchaseth hatred, is
veryfied at this time,
wherein truth is grown
soe loathsome and hate
=ull that whosoever tell
it indangers displeasu
preferring darknesse
before light Joh: 3

Bought from Burscough Museum.

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A ſhort Treatiſe of the

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§. 1.

KNow Courteous Reader, That in the twinckling of an eye, without any more adoe, I will make thee ſee a great combat in which the Church hath been engaged for the ſpace of one hundred yeares, I will make thee contemplate the high

atchievements and noble trophies that truth hath gotten againſt errour and falſhood.

The Sectarie ſhall be handled here with a ſweetneſſe that ſhall not be languiſhing, and the judicious Chriſtian, who loves to be fed with ſolid reaſons, ſhall ſee powerfull motives to make him reverence and cheriſh the greatneſſe of the true Religion; beſides that he will be enabled to learn thence a manner of helping ſuch ſoules as he deſires to have converted. I know ſome that God hath particularly touched by the conſideration of theſe reaſons, which hath incited me (having gone them over lightly in a Chapter of the *Holy Court*) to unfold and enlarge the ſame in their full meaſures.

§. 2.

An Hereſie diſcovered is a face unmasked; take away the vizard you diſarme her, pull away this ſemblance painted

painted with hypocrisie, wherewith she hath plaistered her face, you sufficiently refute her; you need but know her to overcome her, and when the head of his arrows are bare, they have no more force. *S. Jerome in his letter to Ctesiphon.*

Many Doctours have hitherto couragiously endeavoured to take from her this veil and adulterated colours, yea even she at this time hath so favourably unmasked her self for you, that a man must pull out his eyes if he will not behold her deformitie in her rebellion, justly detested by the sage and moderate of her own side. And I beseech them to consider that this egge which they abhorre is laid by the Raven which broodeth in their bosome, and it is a great blindness to break the egges of the Asp, and cherish the Serpent which hath laid them.

Good and generous soules which yet retain some sparks of a truly

Christian spirit, doe well see these proceedings are not according to Scripture which so strictly recommendeth the honour of Kings: and therefore they sound a retreat, they fold up their Ensigns, freely confessing they have erred as men, and protest they will not persevere in mischief like devils.

There are none but enraged spirits, that will be healed by the experience of their own ill, and bury themselves in their own ruine; wise men alwayes make a medicine for themselves of others folly.

§ 3.

Go to then, you who after so many voices from heaven doe still stagger and advise if you ought to return to the Church (which is the womb of your beginning and bosome of your repose) give me leave that I may take this filme from your eyes, grow not outragious, to what purpose should

should you stand quaking in these frightfull agonies? exercise a little Patience. I doe not doubt but you will bless the hand which layeth hold on you when you shall come to see the light; I come not with sword in hand to put a Religion into your heads with main force, I come to you full of compassion of your misery, full of affection for your salvation, full of the desire of your ease, of your contentment, of your glory. Doe you refuse me? A truth doth not gall your eares, when you have understood and diligently considered it, if it please you not, you may reject it. But I beseech God the father of light and mercy may open your heart and eyes to resolve you herein accordingly to his holy will. It is a matter of no small importance to handle the affairs of salvation, we well know we have an immortal soul, which shall survive to all eternity either in the bosome of the glory of heaven, or in

the flames of the damned; we well know by what gate it entred into this life, and where it at the present sojourneth, but we understand not by what passage, when or how it shall issue out. We have nothing here more certain then death, nothing more uncertain then the hour and manner, nothing so assured in the other world as to find there a judgement of God, a heaven for vi:tues, a hell for sin; nothing so doubtfull as the determinate sentence of your p:ocess, nothing so absolutely confirmed as that one cannot be saved without true religion, and nothing so controverted by the malice of Satan as the veritie of religion, notwithstanding if you erre in the choice, you make ship-wrack before you weigh anchor, and so long as you remain in errour nothing can save or deliver you from eternal damnation; for it is a belief of all Christianitie witnessed by Saint *Fulgentius*, "that all

" all thoſe who ſhut up the courſe of
" their life out of the true Church, al-
" though they have filled the world
" with Hoſpitals, and ſhed their
" bloud for the name of Chriſt, can-
" not free themſelves from the eter-
" nal torments of hel, *Lib. de fide, ad Petr. Diacon. cap.* 18. See wretched ſoules if at this dreadfull hour of death and Gods judgement you find your ſelf miſerably deceived by your blind guides under the pretext of Scripture, whither will you have recourſe? Verily whatſoever is ſaid to you, you know well in your conſcience that dying in the faith of ſo many holy religious Princes and Godly Biſhops in *England* who have directly oppoſed yours, you have all the poſsible aſſurance of a good religion, nor do I think you have ſo laid down all ſhame that you condemn ſo great and illuſtrious perſonages.

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§. 4.

You are not ignorant that all innovation is dangerous, but principally in matters of Faith. They that follow the main current and generality of a religion ancient & well grounded, cannot periſh but by falling from heaven, cannot ſtumble in their belief, but by intombing themſelves in the ruines of Chriſtianitie, which God neither can nor will ſuffer to be loſt according to his promiſe. They that adhere to novelties ſail in a ſea of monſters and tempeſts without pole-ſtar, without rudder, without Pilot, without any other guide then their own judgement, which cannot chuſe but very eaſily deceive them. If there be flames in hell employed in the puniſhment of ſinfull ſoules, there is no doubt but they ſhall chiefly be inflicted on them who have laboured to rend the garment of Jeſus Chriſt,

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to break the connexions and seames of the Church, to strike at the lawfull powers ordained by God to throw disorder, fire and bloud into the state of their Prince. What horrour will it be in this great and general day, when you shall see your innocency by association of religion ingaged in the enormitie of so many disastrous crimes which you must expiate with pains which shall have no other limits but eternity? Enter again into your self a little, and afford so much patience as to view and know your self, for if you desire to proceed with all security, I advise you three things.

§. 5.

First, to have a spirit throughly discharged of anticipations, bold animosities and apprehensions, which raise mists even among the most resplendent lights of truth. It is said that

that heretofore at *Smyrna* a City of *Greece* there was a falſe mirrour kept in the Temple, which did repreſent the moſt beautifull and amiable faces with notable deformity, and on the contrary gave to creatures ugly and miſhapen a luſter of borrowed and wholly imaginary beauty. Your paſſionate Leaders in the falſe glaſs of their doctrine repreſent the true Church to you, this chaſt ſpouſe of Heaven, as a monſter compoſed of all ſorts of abominations, you have your ears perpetually beaten with the ſeven hills of *Rome*, with Antichriſt, with the horned beaſt, with idolatries and ſuperſtitions which they maliciouſly obtrude to us. If you remain fixed in theſe perſwaſions, how can you doe other but hate that which you know not. On the contrary you are made to behold a Sect which you well know to have been begun by a general revolt from ſuperior powers, by ſcandalous ſenſuali-

ties

ties and an infinite number of cruelties, as a celestial doctrine, beautifull radiant under the pretext of Scripture, which is merely imaginary and falsly pretended; and considering it under this veil you love it, and as *Nero*, who through an Emerald beheld the flames and bloud of his countrey and found it a pleasant mirrour, so whilst you behold and view the pretended religion under a veil, all seemeth beautifull and goodly to you. Take away for one houre at least this partial prejudicate spirit drunk with passion and take another calme, reposed, setled, which hath an indifferent ear for each part.

§. 6.

The second thing is, you must not too much stick upon petty curiosities of a thousand controversies and unprofitable disputations. Truth ordinarily is therein ill handled under the shadow

ſhadow of cheriſhing it, it is haled this way and that way with ſuch boldneſs, that it ſeemeth every one would diſmember it, and each man take his ſhare away with him. After ſo many ſtabs and ſtocadoes on this ſide and that ſide, no other fruit is derived but yea and no, and the ſoul oft-times finds it ſelf as much void of peace and reaſon as it is full of gall and darkneſs. You know what is written in the viſion of the Prophet *Elias*, *King*. 3 *ch*. 19. God is not to be found in the ruſtling of impetuous winds, in boiſterous ſtorms, in turmoiles, in fire; but in a gentle gale which bringeth light and refreſhment in its wings. Likewiſe veritie fit to handle the converſion of ſoules is not ordinarily in theſe ardent and contentious diſputations where the prizes of faſt and looſe are play'd, but in the repoſe of a quiet ſpirit, temperate, moulded in the hands of a prudent dociblenes, for faith

faith runneth a different course from humane sciences. To say why this? and why that? to sift the causes, the effects, the tenents, the utmost bounds of a point is the vulgar track of inferiour Schools. Faith which hath God himself for object, who is a bottomlesse abysse of light and perfection cannot demonstrate all that it believeth, otherwise it would not be faith, nor God would no more be God. He that seeketh faith seeketh not reason, *Athens* hath nothing to intermeddle with *Hierusalem*, nor the Academy with the Church, *Chr. serm.* 58. Our School is the porch of *Solomon*, which teacheth us we must search for God with simplicity of heart, and not with frivolous curiosity, *Tert. de præscr.* Faith moveth upon two poles, the first is to believe what God hath revealed, the second to believe because he who is an eternal Truth hath reveal'd it, without any other restriction, specified modification

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tion or humane distinction. What wrong doth the Creator to us if he would have us to believe more of him then we are able to comprehend? it is not for the iron to ask of the magnete or loadstone from whence those charmes and secret influences come, wherewith he attracteth and captiveth him, it is enough that he follow. When God propoleth a veritie unto thee by the voice and general consent of the Church (poor man) thou kickest, thou friskest, thou dost appeal to humane reason, to sense, to judgement which have wings too short and insufficient to undertake such a flight. Whil'st thou therein proceedest in this manner, thy faith will be no true faith, but a phantasie which will entertain thee with false illusions, and leave thee real torments. It is a great science in matters of Religion to have a holy and conscientious ignorance. All Hereticks (saith *Tertullian* above cited) promise reason

son and knowledge, all of them assail faith with humane understanding; God teacheth us another way, which is to adore his mysteries with submission of spirit, and make of our own proper judgements a sacrifice on the altar of Faith.

§. 7.

The third thing which you are to have in great recommendation, is diligently to purge your conscience from the rust of sin. The spirit of God is pleased & fed amongst lillies, & nothing so much hindereth heavenly doctrine as impurity of life. Pearls are dissolved in vineger, and truth in a heart made bitter with the corruption of vice. If you desire that it should come to you, observe three things exactly; First, endeavour as much as you can possibly to free your self from a certain spirit of presumption, which puffeth men up and inebriateth them with the love of their own

own judgement before they be throughly awakened, and from hence it comes that they affectionately embrace themselves, and make such esteem of their own thoughts, words, maxims, that all seemeth Gold. This is a pernicious illusion, and which stoppeth up all accesse to our Saviour who is much pleased to converse with the humble. Secondly, live with great puritie of soul and body, carefully preserving your self from being engulphed in sensual affections, pleasures and ordures of flesh which bury the soul in a puddle and make it uncapable of all good. God hath not upon earth a more pleasing hostesse then puritie of heart, *Prov. c. 2. v. 2.* It is that which procures for us the amity of the Sovereign King, and placeth us near the divinity, *Sap. 6.* Finally, labour to adorn your self with charitie, and the very bowels of pity towards the poor and persons afflicted, assisting them according to

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the ability which you have; and when you fortified with such armes shall daily knock at the gates of heaven by incessant prayer, asking grace, speaking and conferring often with some Orthodox Doctour, virtuous, charitable and peacefull; I have infinite hopes the father of light will dart upon your heart his beams, and give you leave to know the truth. In the mean space ponder a little in your heart four notable points which will make you discover the falseneſſe of the pretended Religion.

§. 8.

The first is the beginning, the second the progresse, the third the foundation of the doctrine, the fourth the fruits. Behold four touch-stones to judge aright of religion. If all this doe well accord with reason and verity in any pretended Religion, I give you leave to follow it, but if all therein

therein be tottering and ruinous, I beseech you, open your eyes a little and view your misery after you have so often shut up your eares against reason, and your heart against charity.

§. 9.

Then first of all consider whether this religion you professe be ancient or new, if it be ancient and the Religion of the Apostles you ought to follow it, if new you ought to condemn it, no man doubteth. Now it is new as noveltie it self, which is proved, first, by the name thereof; since every Religion which is called reformed ought necessarily to have been deformed, for a thing is not reformed which never had deformitie, this is clear. And every Religion which is said to be reformed in things essential, as Sacraments was then before deformed in matters essential,

sential, and so deformed that in a word, it was no longer a Religion; for it is as impossible a Religion can subsist without the verity of Faith and Sacraments, as to say that a man can be a man without a reasonable soul. Now this Religion of which we make question (according to your saying) was deformed in essential things, to wit in Sacraments; whereby it appears it was no more Religion, then a lying Truth, to speak properly, is Truth it self. Wherefore we must conclude that those who boast they have reformed it within these hundred yeares have made it wholly new, as if the sun had been annihilated for a thousand yeares space, and that God came to restore it, it would be an absolute new sun; so is this Religion wholly new. Behold then if every new Religion (as is most evident) carry it's condemnation; see you not that this same which you professe is false, since it

proveth

proveth it self to be new, and discovered since *Luther* and *Calvin*. And think not this novelrie is only proved by reason, for it is the very confession of the *French* reformed Church, which openly professeth in their one and thirtieth Article, that the Church hath not onely been reformed, but absolutely made new. This sole innovation (if you judge aright of it) should give you occasion to suspect it. The sage Commonwealth of the *Lycians* heretofore ordained that all those who would propose any novelty in matter of law, should deliver it in publick with a halter about their necks, to the end that if their propositions were not found to be good & profitable, the authors thereof should be strangled in the place. And what can one think of them who have brought in such huge novelisme in matter of Religion, so disastrous and so prejudicial to Christendome by the effusion of so much blood? Judge

your

your selves, and weigh at leasure the force of this Argument; you shall find it is very hard to find evasions against this verity; for of two things you must confesse one, either that the Church hath wholly been extinct the space of above a thousand yeares, and then was newly repaired according to the ancient model of the Apostles, or that it hath alwayes been on foot, but invisible and unknown. These two evasions are very vain and frivolous as you shall understand thereunto a little applying your judgement: for to speak of the first that the Church hath been newly reformed: first, this is against the word of God, who to his Church promiseth an assistance without interruption even to the end of the world; these are his words, *Behold I am with you all the dayes, even to the consummation of the world*, *Matth.* 28. *v.* 2. he admitteth not one sole day of interruption, and

you make one of a thousand or eleven hundred yeares. Secondly, you make a Jesus Christ disarrayed, a Church reduced to nothing for the space of ten ages, which is very intollerable; and shall never be, nay not during the time of Antichrist's persecution. Moreover, were it so, you must deny the providence of God, so to have abandoned to a general desolation a work fast cemented with the blood of his Son, yea he who hath care even of the nests of little Halcyons. Finally, you must say that Jesus Christ was an impostour and unable, an impostour, to have promised a Church without interruption; unable, in that he could not preserve it, all which is blasphemous.

To affirm the second, that this Church hath alwayes been but unknown and invisible, if all men were changed into beasts it might happen they would be thus perswaded, but if they yet retain one drachme of humane

mane capacity it were impossible, so impertinent is this Proposition. For first of all because you will affirm nothing without proof out of holy Scripture, it is demanded of you where is it spoken, of this unknown Church, of this invisible Church? much otherwise, She is compared to a city planted upon a hill, to the light, to the pavillion in the Sun as the Scripture teacheth us, and *S. Augustine* proveth it by the same Sripture upon the eighteenth Psalme, *In Sole posuit tabernaculum suum, in manifestatione posuit Ecclesiam suam*, August. *in Psalm.* 18. Secondly, if this Church were unknown whither should the Gentiles have addressed themselves for their conversion? or those that were doubtfull for their resolution, or all the faithfull for direction? God referreth them to his Church. Is it not a mere mockery to send them to a thing invisible? Thirdly, if there be no proof in Scri-

pture, which averreth this; some humane reason at least is required. Can a Proposition more reasonable be made, then to ask of those who maintain a thing to have been in former ages, to produce some marks thereof; that they shew how for a thousand yeares of desolation their Church hath been in being, that they set before us one sole history which witnesseth how in the thousand, two, three, four and five hundred yeares there was found a company of brethren, who professed an universal summe of Articles which these men now maintain. The Phœnix is very rare, but yet it is said in such and and such a year a Phœnix was seen in *Rome*. Do we find that any man saith the like of the pretended reformed Religion? there is not a word of it. We find the *Waldenses*, *Circumcellians*, *Gnosticks*, *Borboriter* and *Beguins* who have held some piece of our Sectaries belief; and we likewise

likewise behold that all have been condemned as Hereticks; but there is not one to be found who hath framed this bodie of the pretended Religion as it is at this day composed. What meaneth this? is it to have one small sparkle of the understanding of man to affirm such a thing to have been, and not to know how to produce one Proof? is not this to play *Æsop*'s Ass, that vaunted he had great secrets of wisdome to communicate to other beasts, and to authorize it he hid himself a long time in a dry pit, from whence he came with a Philosopher's cloak, saying, that whilst he had been invisible he had much addicted himself to Sciences and the knowledge of truth; in the end it was known he was an Ass, and with many blowes and bastonadoes he was sent back again to the pit from whence he came. This is the Parable which *Tertullian* (*in. Marc. lib.* 4. *cap.* 23.) spake to the Hereticks

of his time: You now come forth as an Ass out of *Æsop*'s pit, and you cry out; Tell me who are you? from whence come you? who sent you? what right have you upon us, to extinguish the belief of our fore-fathers? do you not behold a beginning of the pretended shameless and ridiculous Religion, which well proveth it's nullitie.

§. 10.

The second Consideration on which we must rest is well to ballance the progresse, advancement and publication of this Sect. If you find it conformable to the ancient manner of the primitive Church follow it, if it be directly opposite have you not great reason to abandon it? Now Sir so it is, and behold how; The true Church from her infancy hath had four marks most evident, the first is a profound humility, the

second

second a great love of virginity, chastity and continence, witnesse *Athenagoras* a most ancient Author who makes mention of this great purity of body, and saith it is the mark of the excellency of our Religion, *Reperire apud nos est permultos viros & mulieres qui in cœlibatu consenescunt*, *Athenag.* the third is a great obedience to superiours, recommended by S. *Paul* to the *Romans*, *Let every soul be subject to superiour powers*, *Rom. c.* 12. the fourth a sweetnesse and admirable patience in persecutions: Behold what appeared in the publication of the Gospel. If you observe any thing like in the progresse of the pretended Religion, then have you cause to have a good opinion of it; but if you therein do see all her proceedings opposite to the same, conclude it is not of God. And tell me what are her proceedings in the fore-alledged points? it cannot be denyed but

that the vertue of humility is the foundation of Faith, and one of the most noble Characters of Christian Religion. *Where humility is* (saith the wise man) *there is wisdome, Proverb.* 11. and *God is pleased to drie up the roots of proud people, Ezec.* 10. Now all Heresie is inseparably tyed to a proud spirit, from whence it took beginning, derived nourishment, and received increase. We might alledge an infinite number of testimonies to this purpose, but we onely now tell you, how two Heretick women of the race of *Elxay* did as it were cause their spittle to be adored, and how one *Illebert* gave the paring of his nailes to his Sectaries for Reliques, *Epiphan. haref.* 19. so true it is that Heresie being a sprout of the evil spirit still retaines the mark of that pride, which haveing once assayed to disturb heaven, never suffers the earth to enjoy repose: It is well known how in the last

last age one called *John Leyden*, by trade a Butcher, and ringleader of the Hereticks in *Germany*, having first published a law of plurality of wives, went into the field, drawing along with him huge troopes of unchaste creatures, where after he had play'd the Prophet, he caused himself to be chosen King, took a triple diademe, erected a proud pavillion wherein he gave audience, established his Court and Potentates, choosing out rogues and knaves at that time attired in cloth of gold and silver, and other costly stuffs, which having but a little before served for ornaments on Altars, were now cut in pieces by the hands of these Harpyes, and imployed to cover infamous bodies, that rather deserved to be involved in sulphur and flames. When this King of cards, marched through the City you would have taken him for the great Duke of *Muscovia* or some antick King of

Hierusalem, a Page mounted on horseback bare a Bible covered with plates of gold before him, another carried a naked sword, willing thereby to expresse that he was born for the defence of the Gospel. Besides he commonly had in his hands a golden globe, whereon these words were engraven, *King of Justice on earth. Anne Delphonse* the first of fourteen wives this Impostour had married, went along with him clad in a rich mantle furred with Ermines clasped with a great buckle all of massie gold, *Corvin. & Florimond.* This would seem strange if we had not lately known the insolence of Rebells and their inaginary regalities, which are mounted to such an height of fury that they draw very near to the like frenzie, yet will we not at this time instance hereupon in any thing concerning this Article. We onely say that to separate religion from rebellion, and the manners

ners of men from the doctrine, the maxims of Sectaries make an absolute profession of the most enraged vanity that may be observed in the course of humane life. For if the Scripture doth so strictly recommend unto us in the practice of Humility, not to make our selves over-wise or able, *Rom.* 12. not to rest upon our judgement or proper prudence, *Proverb.* 35. to hearken to our forefathers, to obey Pastours who have lawfull succession, to work or Salvation with fear and trembling at Gods judgements, what may we think of a Sect which authorizeth a peculiar spirit which hath ever been the seminary of all Schisms and disorders, which without distinction putteth the Scripture into all hands to judge of points of Faith, from whence have risen amongst them an infinite number of divisions, which teacheth to account as dotages all that which the piety of our fore-fa-

thers

thers reverenced, all that the wiſeſt and moſt religious men of the world decided, which teacheth to ſpit againſt light and trample under foot the commandements of Paſtors and Prelates, to flatter ones ſelf with aſſurance of ſalvation & predeſtination in the greateſt exorbitancies and neglects of life? Verily, it is an admirable thing to behold how the petty ſpirits of Artificers and ſilly women buſie themſelve herein, and to what a degree of pride they come, when abuſed by I know not what imaginary Texts of Scripture, they are puffed up with their own abilitie. What pride more irregular then to ſee men not content with the Religion practiſed in *England*'s three converſions, nor pleaſed with the Churches and Tombes of their anceſtors that had been conſtant in the ſame at leaſt a thouſand yeares, to become ſo curious as to think their Kings and Paſtors all along to have been

been idolaters, and all the best part of man-kind bestial, from whom they separate themselves as from people infected with a spiritual contagion, and do all they can to Deifie their own opinions? What Pharisee ever came near this height of pride? If there were any the least sparkle of humility, a good soul would say within it self, What do I? or, where am I? it is an old saying, he that too much trusteth to himself is a devil to himself. I think I am grounded on the word of God, but have not all Hereticks had the same foundation, which they in conclusion found onely to subsist in their own imagination? Why should I separate my self from the main body of the ancient Church, to satisfie the itch of my peculiar judgement? It is not credible that so many men of honour & worth, who are clear-sighted in all other things should be deceived in this, they may have had doubts,

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and opinions as we; but they have overcome them by humility and reason, they have ſtuck to the body of the tree, they have followed the general conſent of people, which rather live in uniformity then adhere to novelty. Let them not be figured to me as Idolaters, idiots and ſuperſtitious men, they have far other aimes then theſe. The wiſeſt and moſt temperate of our ſide believe them not to be damned in their Religion; to what purpoſe then is all this, to handle a buſineſſe apart, to be ſeparated from our near allies, from Sacraments, Church, Tombes, and to be the cauſe of ſo many diviſions, ſpoils and bloudſhed? I plainly ſee we muſt hereafter live in re-union. It is the ſpirit of God which commands it. If I have beliefs in my heart different from the ordinary, I ought not to divulge them to create Schiſmes and ſcandals. I ſhould informe my ſelf, I ſhould obey, it is fit I

somewhat yield to the love of those who look after me for my good, and to the authoritie of such as command over me by justice. I cannot perish in making a sacrifice of my proper will for peace & the common good, to those whom God hath appointed me for guiders and superiours. This is the great science which I will hereafter seek in the government of the inward man. Behold what an humble creature might say; but insolencie the inseparable companion of Heresie proceedeth much otherwise. And as concerning Purity, let us not go about to speak of the vices of particular men, which are excesses of nature, not lawes of profession; for to say there are vices in one body & in one sect, is to say nothing; but to say these vices are confirmed and authorized by the maximes and examples of the same Sect, this is to say all. Now this is it which we behold in the proceedings of pretenders:

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for it cannot be denied but we ought to keep promise with men, and by a much stronger reason what we promise to God, yet notwithstanding the principal of the pretenders have taught by word, and practised by example the doctrine of the whole body, which is, that one may break a vow of chastity, to wit, of a thing very good; for it is praised by the mouth of our Saviour, *Matth. c.* 17. and of Saint *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 7. of a thing very reasonable, for millions of Saints have practised it in the beginning of the Church; of a thing most holy, for the Scripture hath given it the name of Sanctity, *Thess. 4.* to break a vow sealed as with the seal of the invocation of the holy Trinity and the bloud of Jesus, and break it not by frailty, but by profession; against the practice and doctrine of all antiquity, is this a mark of the true Church.

Take the third mark, Obedience, most

moſt natural to the primitive Chriſtians, and all juſt men who are called *a nation of obedience*, *Eccl.* 3. and you ſhall find in the infancy of the pretended Religion a revolt againſt all Eccleſiaſtical and ſecular powers continued in all times, and all the parts of the world, where ſhe might be introduced with ſuch cruelties as we know by woefull experience.

Take laſtly the fourth mark, which is the dove-like ſweetneſſe that ſhone in the firſt Chriſtians, even in the time of perſecutions, and you ſhall find in the pretended Religion there is nothing but conventicles, conſiſtories of State, factions, armies, ranſackings and horrours which make all good conſciences to tremble. Should I enlarge upon this diſcourſe I could mention matters able to make marble weep, but I will not labour to be eloquent in our evils, which I ſeek to ſweeten what I may, not intending to exaſperate any. Onely I ask what

will

will your private Sectaries answer to the Church at the day of judgement, when She shall say, my first children bare neither rod nor stick to plant Faith in the hearts of men, and you have published a Religion all bristled with swords, and footed over with the smoak of cannons, all sprinkled with bloud of Catholicks; my lawfull children at the publication of the Gospel spake not one bitter word against executioners among the most exquisite torments which might be inflicted: and you, what vein I pray have you spared in my body from whence you drew not rivers of bloud? your fore-fathers built Churches for me, and you have demolished them, they erected Altars and you have pulled them down, they advanced Crosses to me and you have broken them, they have consecrated Priests for my service and you have massacred them in my arms; *See the book of Monsieur de*

Sainct

Saint *in the book of Sacrage.* The Apoſtles taught me to place the bodies of Saints under Altars, and you have taken them from that repoſe whereunto nature conſigned them, and which is often afforded to malefactors, you have divided them between fire and water; yea you have infected Elements, making them as executioners of thoſe venerable bodies whoſe foot-ſteps they honoured: and of what bodies? of a Saint *Irenæus* burnt at *Lyons*, of a Saint *Hilarie* at *Poictiers*, of a Saint *Aignan* at *Orleance*, of a Saint *Martin* and a Saint *Francis*, of *Paul* at *Tours*, not to ſpeak of others both in *France* and other countries. The Apoſtles teach us to honour Kings, and you have loaden them with reproaches, even to the figuring of King *Charles* the ninth, with marks moſt unworthy in a coin you ſtampt with Croſſes and Church-chalices, yea to the diſinterring of the

heart

heart of *Francis* the second, interred at Saint *Crosse* in *Orleance*, and the wasting it in flames. Judge now (O you pretenders) whether a Religion which carried on the brow thereof acts so barbarous, pollutions so hideous, cruelties so execrable, can possibly have the least spark of piety, & tell me not that some cruelties have also been practised upon those of your party, I will not undertake to excuse all popular commotions which the fury and cruel proceedings of the prime rebelling Hereticks have occasioned. I approve extremely sweetnesse, and think that Diet is more likely to cure then Phlebotomy. But if the justice of Kings have ordained something thereupon, it belongs not to us to judge their actions, only this I will say, that the housholder's rod justly lifted up against a rebelling servant, ought not to be compared with the armes of a servant, which he takes in hand against his master,

murther-

murthering his fellow-servants in his presence. Be not those excellent marks for the establishing of Religion? what excuse can the pretenders have before God's unavoidable Tribunall for having followed such a Sect, which is raised for no other end then Rebellion against all superiour powers, and the vilifying of nobility.

§. 11.

For a third consideration, examine well the foundation of this new Religion, and you shall discover the deceit thereof. Catholick Religion hath for foundation all that which may settle a fair and generous soul, as Saint *Augustine* observed, *contra epist. fundamenti.* If the word of God should hold the chief place and serve as a *basis* for this great building of the Church (as is most reasonable) we incessantly challenge ministers to shew us one onely Text expresse formal

nal and irreproveable, contrary to the Articles of our Faith, for hitherto they have produced nothing but semblances to deceive inferiour judgements being unable to make them good before understanding and capable men; If a lawfull succession and mission of Pastours be required, which is absolutely necessary for the establishment of an ecclesiastical hierarchie, we shew that from the Apoles hitherward our Prelates and Bishops doe all successively follow one another; If the authority of Councils be demanded, which are the sinews, the mouthes and living Oracles of a true Religion, let them be looked on the revolution of so many ages, and they will be found altogether for us; If the interpretations of Fathers and Doctours (who were the lights of their times, the instruments of the Holy Ghost and secretaries of the Divinity) have any weight with a soul well-composed to

establish a truth then especially when they all with one accord and consent do speak, they loudly condemn the errour and novelisme of our adversaries; If miracles which were wrought in the sight of all mankind with so much approbation that they have evicted confession from the most incredulous, and reverence from the most stupid, weigh down the ballance, it is our side; If the study of perfection and holinesse of life be infallible marks of true Faith, you may as soon tell the starres in the skie as reckon up the number of holy personages who have flourished through all ages amongst us, and who therein are daily noted with such excellencies, that living as Angels they speak like true Oracles of the Divinity; Finally, if we will give any credit to ancient monuments, the marble in Churches, and tombes of our auncestours speak for us. Behold verily the powerfull and invincible reasons

which

which made Saint *Augustine* resolve upon the Religion we professe. Many great considerations (said he) with much reason keep me in the obedience of the Catholick Church, the consent of people and nations hold me, the authority of the same Church which is risen up by miracles, nourished with hope, augmented by charity, established by it's antiquity. The succession of Bishops holds me therein, which beginning in the See and authority of Saint *Peter*, to whom God recommended the care of the flock, is maintained to this present time: lastly, the name of Catholick holds me in it; he addeth (*contra epist. Manichæi*) he would not believe the Gospel it self if he were not convinced by the authority of the Church. Much after which style it is written in the eight and fourtieth Epistle to one *Vincentius* who had been very wavering in choice of Religion; My friend it is long since

that

that your spirit hath been sickly and disquieted, if you will make an end of it's troubles, and put a period to your labours, there is but one word that can doe it, seek and follow the way of the Catholick Church; Believe me true Religion can neither be obtained nor conserved without the Empire and command of some great authority as is that of the universal. No less saith Saint *Jerome* writing against the *Luciferians*; *Ecclesiæ salus à summi sacerdotis dignitate dependet, &c.* the manutention of the Church depends of the dignity of a soveraign High Priest, to whom unlesse an eminent power, raised above the rest of men be attributed, there will be made as many schismes in the Church as there be. It is also the wholesome counsel of that most ancient and grave author *Vincentius Lirinensis*, let us follow the generality, the antiquity, the common consent, let us hold what is held

every where, and alwayes, and by all, so it be authorized by the divine Law and the Catholick Churches Tradition, *Lib. de profanis vocum novitatibus. Tertullian* addes, that *Nil ultra scire, omnia scire est*, to know nothing but that is to know all.

Let us now see whether you have better choice and more consideration then this worthy man, who was one of the prime wits of the world, especially if you consider him back't by those other eminent men. Let us see what your ministers oppose against so many infallible proofs to cover their want of antiquity, mission, succession, miracles, sanctity, judgement and reason. They cease not to buzze out every where a false pretext of Scripture, which verily is the greatest illusion that ever was; for these wicked ones seeing themselves battered on every side from the beginning of this Reformation, knew

knew well in their consciences the Scripture was against them, yet notwithstanding (said they) to mock at the faith of man-kind and lead them into atheisme, we must avoid the decision of a power lively and lawfull, we must onely take colour from the holy Text, we will make it say what we list, we will maintain, nothing is to be believed but what is written, and that which is written we will disguise with our glosses and consequences, to catch those who think they have some wit; behold the onely means to colour our pretences. You then who are endued with sufficient and solid judgement, consider a little how deceitfull, weak and ruinous this foundation is; first, it appears that the devil and all hereticks of former times have taken the same foundation, ever saying the Scripture was on their sides, which is most untrue. Notwithstanding behold to what pass all hereticks came:

Muncer proved by Scripture he was the Prophet *David*. *George* a diabolical man that he was God, *Eon* condemned by the Council of *Rheims* that he was the true *Messias* even by the same Scripture, whence the truth of Saint *Austin*'s words appears, that thence are heresies sprung, that good Scriptures are not well understood, *ad Consent. epist.* 222. Secondly, the world having been two thousand yeares and more without Scriptures; the first were written in Hebrew by abbreviation with such ambiguity, that every one following his own opinion might frame a Bible to his own liking, yea sometimes such diversity was found in the Hebrew, Greek and Chaldee letter, that where one reads *David*, another reads a bowl, where one the liver, another a pillow; where one beauty, another a savage beast; where one the word, another life; where one reads the living, another

the

the dead. And you who neither know Hebrew, Greek nor Latine, on whom will you relie? Thirdly, upon passages written in very clear and expresse termes, as, *This is my body*; the spirits of men have forged two hundred opinions quite different: what then will become of difficulties more thorny? *Julian* Bishop of *Toledo* wrote a volume of apparent Contradictions in Scripture, which in substance hath none; but which notwithstanding seems many times to say things directly contrary, such obscurity there is in some passages. Whom should we believe? do you not see this were a means to maintain eternal divisions if there were no Judges to decide differences in a Kingdome, but that every one should carry the cause according to the proportion of his loud crying, to make his Texts and Allegations to be of force? what would this come unto? and you would bring the like

disorder into the Church. Fourthly, in the ancient Law the Bible was in the Ark and no man durst open it, and turn it to resolve controversies upon this Rule, but did expect the decision thereof from the Priests mouth, who had a lawfull succession. *The lips of the priest are the storehouses of knowledge, and from his mouth you shall enquire the law*, said the Prophet *Malachy, chap.2. ver.7.* Fiftly, the wisest men in the world after they had maturely thought upon it, found no other way to determine controversies, but to have recourse to the decision of a head; such is the opinion of Saint *Irenæus*, Saint *Augustine*, Saint *Jerome*, *Vincentius Lirinensis*, and all others. Sixthly, it is the commandment of God, when any controversies shall be raised, my Priests shall hold Sessions and shall judge, for of necessity we must have an authority commanding, magistral & decisive, *Ez.44.24.*

For

For conclusion, can one speak any thing more just then that in case any place of Scripture hath obscurities in it, it were to much better purpose to hear thereupon the decision of ancient Fathers disinterested from our controversies, then to enforce our selves to pass upon the judgement of a passionate adversary without warrant or authority. When in the year 1523. heresie began first in *Evance*, and that there was but one Minister a wool-carder, called *John Clark* in the City of *Meaux*, where should we find the interpretation of Scripture, in the mouth of this carder or in a lawfull Council? judge, behold what you goe about, you may hereby see how much this pretext of Scripture is malicious, shifting and frivolous. I adde that they overthrow themselves by those wayes by which they seek to establish themselves; for if we ought not to believe any thing but that which is written, in what

place of their Bible will they find that twenty thousand passages must be taken out of ours? in what place will they shew us the books of *Maccabees* are not Canonical? in what place that Sunday must be kept holy and not Saturday? in what places that vowes must be broken? in what place that children who cannot yet believe nor answer for themselves are to be baptised; and so many other things, which make us sufficiently understand they ruine themselves by their own hands. Ponder I pray a little and examine judiciously the many passages which they alledge against the Articles of our Faith, and you shall find that in them all; they force and wrest the Scripture to fit it to their own opinions, and that of the King's image which is all of pearls they make the figure of a Fox, as saith Saint *Irenæus*. Alas poor pretenders, to whom doe you trust your salvation, your honours, lives

and

and ſoules, having rejected the belief and tombes of your fore-fathers upon a pretext of Scripture caſt and moulded on the heads of men more changeable then *Prothenſes*? Great God, father of lights and verities, who by thy eternal providence governeſt even the ants and bees, canſt thou have ſo forſaken man in a matter of ſuch importance as that of Religion, as to give him for rule thereof the gloſſes and conſequences of a private ſpirit bereft of reaſon, veritie and thy ſelf? thou art all wiſe and all juſt, and as thou haſt eſtabliſhed Kings and Princes to be the living Oracles and interpreters of humane Laws, ſo haſt thou ordained in thy Church ſome lawfull chief Paſtours and Magiſtrates to decide all differences, not leaving each perſon to his peculiar ſenſe and fantie. Thou accounteſt them heathens and Publicans who ſeparate themſelves and refuſe to hear the Church, yet

these blinded soules cease not to question thy own word, whilst they pretend to be onely ruled by it.

§. 12.

Finally, for the fourth consideration take the maxime from the son of God; to judge well of a Sect, you must judge by the fruits and the effects, *Matth.* 7. What fruits and what effects have we seen to come from this pretended Religion? the fear of God stifled in the hearts of men by a presumption of their salvation, Christian discipline oppressed by liberty, chastity troden under foot by unbridled luxury, the standard of rebellion advanced against the sacred persons of Kings, a million of Christians exposed to slaughter, four thousand Church-vestries pillaged, five hundred Churches demolished, *France* so many times given over as a prey to strangers; corruptions

ptions so strange, desolations so dreadfull, acts so barbarous, that they make the hair stand an-end on the heads of all good men who have never so little understanding. (*Mon. de* Saincles *in his book of Saccage.*) A style of fire were needfull, or a pen of Adamant steeped in bloud to expresse them. Ah poor *France!* how many times by the means of this heresie hast thou seen thy bosome heretofore crowned with eares of corn, and gilded with harvests; all bristled over with battalions? how many times hast thou seen the land covered with blades and the sea with ships? how many times hast thou felt the armes of thy children to encounter in thy proper entrailes? how many times hast thou seen flames of brothers hostility fly through thy fat and fruitfull fields? when hast thou not sweat in all the parts of thy bodie? when have not rivers of bloud been drawn from thy veins, but such bloud

as

as was able to cement together huge bulwarks for the defence of our countrie, or to serve for seed for Flowerde-luces to make them grow and be advanced in the plains of *Palestine*, and they have been sacrificed to furies. Innocencie seemed to afford infants shelter from the tempest, yet the sword of heresie found a passage into their tender bodies; age rendred old men venerable, yet would no pardon be granted to their gray hairs moistned with the massacres of their children; virgins were guarded in their mothers armes as a Temple of God, yet have they been dishonoured: so many personages of quality most eminent have served as an aim for their impiety, their pains have been sport for them, and their death a spectacle. What hair would not stand an-end with horrour, and what eye not weep forth bloud when we speak of these disasters which your selves detest? Nor can you sufficient-

sufficiently wonder at the cruelty of those who have taken the liberty of such barbarous outrages, and so bloudy Tragedies. I passe over this discourse as over coales covered with ashes, and would willingly be silent, were it not that as it was fit to expose massacred bodies to view, thereby to cure the madness of the *Milesian* maids, so must I discover some bloudy effects in the pretended Religion to raise a horrour against it in good soules. Why also have you in this time renewed so many wounds which were not well closed, and for want of a little obedience so lawfully due to the most just Prince of the world, doe you make a civil war to exhaust *France* of gold and bloud after such expence and so many bloudlettings? If these acts seem so base and inhumane to you, why abhor you not the Sect which produceth them? If God curses him who is the cause of scandals, were it not fit, if you have

some

ſome belief eſtranged from common ſenſe, rather a thouſand times to ſtifle it in the bottom of your conſcience, then to divulge it with theſe diſturbances, diviſions, and ſpoil of a country, which you ſhould love as men, and honour as true children? Were there ſome ſtain in the houſe of our mother (which never was) muſt you therefore call her whore, drag her along by the hair, and carry fire to burn her houſe, inſtead of providing water to quench the flames? Is it not better to become patient, to ſweeten the acerbities of times, ſpare wounds on ulcered bodies; or at leaſt to be ſatisfied with ſilence in a matter where you can pretend no right of correction? What was that ſo exorbitant which the Church commanded, for which you ſeparated your ſelves and took armes to defend the wranglings of our Apoſtataes, made afterward your Apoſtles? What maximes have we ſo rough and unreaſonable,

reasonable, that they must be taken away with the sword, there to plant Reformation? Consider a little the notable corrections and admirable policies which arch-hereticks have invented to introduce them into the Church. I will here with all sincerity recite the Maximes of the chief Sectaries, of which some have afterwards affrighted you, and you have disavowed them, as you daily doe by others; God making you plainly see the inconstancie and great diversitie of your doctrine, the little confidence you should put therein. The Catholick Church teacheth that God would have all the world saved, as the Apostle hath expressed in the epistle to *Timothy*, (1 *Tim.* 2. 4.) that he desires nothing but what is good, whereof he is the source; and that he communicated himself to all his children. The Pretended say that God absolutely desires that which is evil, yea doth it willingly; and predestinates

destinated men without any regard, some to life, others to eternal damnation; as if a father who had daughters should cut the throat of one most innocent, & marry the other wealthily, having no other reason for it but his will; which is most execrable impietie pronounced by the author of this Sect, who saith that men are all created to the like condition, but that life eternal is preordained for some, and eternal damnation for others; *Calvin. instit. 3. cap. 21.* the Catholick Church speaks of our Saviour with most profound and religious reverence; the Author of the Pretended makes him inferiour to his Father, calling him the second King after God, and attributeing ignorance to him, despair on the cross, and the paines of the damned, *Calvin. in Evang. Matth. cap. 27. Instit. 2. c. 16.* which things are most horrible; the Catholick Church holdeth Jesus Christ to be the onely media-

mediatour of redemption, and that there is no other name either in heaven or earth in which and by which we can be saved, and for that cause she honoureth it all she can, extending and multiplying the fruits of honour and praise, not onely in his own person but in his friends also, which are the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, whom we pray unto as the fruits of his Crosse, and take them for mediators of intercession, grounded therein on the word of God, which commands the friends of *Job* to take him for intercessour, though he were in this transitory life; *Iob* 42. and not at all doubting if the soul of the evil rich man prayed unto *Abraham* out of Hell, *Luke* 16. but we may on earth be permitted to call to our aid soules so faithfull, so much honoured by God, and whose praises he reckons his own greatness; We likewise reverence holy images, since it is an ancient custome of the Church,

Church, the marks whereof we yet behold in *Tertullian*, (*de pudicitia ca.*7.) who might have converſed with the Diſciples of the Apoſtles; the Pretended quite contrary feigning they honour Saints as one would *Socrates* or *Phocion*, perpetually mock thereat, break down their images, call them by the names of Idols and falſe gods; the Catholick Church holds man hath free will ſupported in this Article upon ſo many paſſages of Scripture, as *Gen.* 4. *Deut.* 30. *Eccleſ.* 15. the Pretended deſpoil man of all liberty, which is to deſtroy the worth of his condition, and to deprive him of the beſt part of his eſſence; the Catholick Church holds the bloud of our Saviour is a treaſure infinite, and very able to purge away all manner of evil, and to merit all good; but that it is applyed to us by works of ſatisfaction and merit, and purgative paines in thoſe who ſtand in need of it, as a medicine which

which profiteth the sick man by the cooperation he bringeth; the Pretended teaches good works are not necessary to salvation, but onely faith justifieth, which is to open a gate to the corruption of good manners, and to all kind of liberty; the Catholick Church believes a Purgatory for soules which going out of the body are not yet purified, grounded therein on nineteen or twenty passages of Scripture, all understood by the ancient Fathers according to our belief: the Pretended having disturbed the ashes of the dead, deprive him of the assistance and prayers of the living, contrary to divine and humane lawes and the manifest practice of all antiquity; the Catholick Church makes a Sacrament of marriage according to Saint *Paul* and the interpretation of most eminent Fathers of the Church, the Pretended make their marriages like those of the Barbarians; the Catholick Church holds the

the reality of the body of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar, and believes that under the Sacramental ſpecies or accidents which are ſenſible and corruptible our Saviour ſubſiſteth with a glorious body which is called by S. *Paul* a ſpiritual body, becauſe it is dignified with qualities & conditions of a ſpirit though it looſe not the eſſence of a body, ſhe adoreth therein with all humility that which ſhe cannot comprehend ſufficiently, after expreſſe paſſages of Scripture, the deciſion of fourty councels, the teſtimony of five hundred authours ancient, grave and ſincere. Adding from the Authority of the moſt illuſtrious Council of *Nice*, that it is the unbloudy ſacrifice preſented for the expiations of the ſinnes of the world, the Pretended inſtead of it will place chimeraes, imaginary figments, ceſſation of Sacrifice, and abominable deſolation; the Catholick Church publiſheth confeſſion and remiſſion

of

of ſinnes by the miniſtry of Prieſts, as the Son of God did inſtitute it in S. *Iohn*, (*Ioh.* 20. *v.* 22. 23.) the Pretended ſhaking off ſo wholeſome a yoak hath made himſelf a way to liberty and diſſolution; the Catholick Church acknowledgeth a viſible head on earth eſtabliſhed by the expreſs word of Jeſus Chriſt in Saint *Matthew*, (*Mat.* 16. *v.* 17. 18. 19.) averred by all the holy Fathers, confeſſed by the continuation of a lawfull ſucceſſion in the revolution of ſo many ages, the Pretended ſeek to bring into the houſe of God an anarchy of the children of *Belial*; the Catholick Church is the bright Star of Truths, the Pretended is a furious comet which throwes diſorder and poiſon into all parts of the world. To ſay truly, ſhould an Angel have ſpoken it, yea could it create a golden age, never might this deſign be accompliſht by wayes ſo furious and turbulent. But having coſt *France* ſo much

much gold and bloud, what hath it done but that which is mentioned by the excellent pen of Cardinal *Berule* in the preface to his book of the greatneſſe of Jeſus: a Church without Apoſtles, Apoſtles without miſſion, paſtours without ſheep, ſheep without ſhepheards, faithfull without Churches, Chriſtians without baptiſme, Prophets without miracles, Temples without altars, altars without ſacrifices, a Religion without ceremonies, a law without obedience, a faith without works, and a charity without effects. Behold! excellent pieces and well worthy of a reformed Church.

§. 13

Now let me ask thee, O worthy Nobility, if thou come to gather all thoſe Reaſons here by me collected, what excuſe thou canſt frame to ſerve thy turn before God's ſevere Tribu-

nal

nal if thou persist still in thy obstinacie. There needs not great volumes of controversies and disputes to cure thee; call thy judgement to councel, doe but contemplate the pure rayes of Nature's light, hearken to thy conscience. Art thou ignorant that the *Israelites* in the ancient law did dismember themselves from the body of the Synagogue which made them fall into most grievous calamities, for the avoiding of which they had recourse to the armes and clemency of *Alexander*? But he understanding that it was a revolted Squadron which was separated from the body of his brethren, was so far from countenancing them that he would not hear mention made of them. *Joseph* the *Iew* in his eleventh book of Antiquities addeth, that he even refused unto them the priviledges which he had granted to all other *Iews*; so much did this valiant Captain by the onely natural judgement find those di-

vorces

vorces of Faith and Religion prejudicial to humane ſociety. Have you never conſidered what the ſame *Ioſeph* recounts in his thirteenth book of Antiquities near the end? That the *Samaritans* after they had made particular faction, and ſevered themſelves from the Synagogue, they built unto themſelves a Temple in *Garizim*, as our Hereticks at *Charenton*, and that boldly publiſhing they had the true Religion, and the true Temple; they cauſed the controverſie to be brought before King *Ptolomee* (though a heathen) for to decide the differences of the true Religion; which indeed was no ſmall trouble and diſguſt to the more illuſtrious of the *Iewiſh* nation, to ſee the authority of the moſt ancient Temple in the world brought in queſtion. Yet notwithſtanding the *Samaritans* inſiſted and did urge to have advocates of both ſides, on condition that they who ſhould be caſt by the Judge

ſhould

ſhould be puniſhed with death. Two Oratours pleaded for *Samaria*, to wit *Sabee* and *Theodoſe*; *Andronic* alone defended the old Religion before the King who ſate in his Throne accompanied with his Princes and Council. This man who was zealous for the Truth did plead ſo well chiefly inſiſting upon antiquity, ſucceſſion of lawfull high Prieſts, and the common ſenſe of all things who had preſented the true Temple with ſo great donaries, that the King gave ſentence in favour of the old Religion, and cauſed the Deputies of the Rebells inſtantly to be put to death. Seeſt thou, O deluded Nobility, what force and vigour this bright ſhining light of nature hath even amongſt heathens and infidels? How the God of nature enforceth even the impure tongues to declare the truth and purity of Religion? Doſt thou not think that if all that which I have ſaid in theſe few lines were repreſented

ſented to the ſtupideſt and moſt ſavage heathen that ever was, he would by the onely light of nature frame the ſame judgement in our behalf which *Ptolomee* gave in favour of the *Hebrews*? And yet wilt thou repell and withſtand the force of God's ſpirit? what wilt thou be able to alledge in thy defence at the dreadfull judgement that expects thee? wilt thou ſay, I thought my Religion was the true and lawfull? Miſerable wretch; ſeeſt thou not that the memory of all ages, the conſent of all Nations, the very ſtones of Churches, and the Marble of thy anceſtours Tombes menaced thee heavily and beſpake thy damnation? What miracles hadſt thou ſeen? what angel had ſpoken to thee? what ſanctity and holineſs of life hadſt thou noted in the Authors of this Sect? wert thou ſo bereaved of humane underſtanding as not to ſee palpably enough that a Religion which begun

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the breach of promises made to God, by the sacriledges and impurities of the Apostataes, by the general revolt against King, against divine and humane lawes, by the filth and ordure of the flesh by the dissolution of good manners by bloud and furies, could not come and take it's source from the holy Ghost? Didst thou not see before thy eyes the desolations of thy poor countrey, the robbing and prophaning of Churches God's houses, to take thence and from no other their source and origine? you will say, I found that my Religion had the Scripture of it's side. Ah! lamentable illusion! to whom did the Scripture send thee if not to the Priests and lawfull Pastours? what said the Scripture unto thee but that thou oughtest to keep the traditions, thou oughtest to obey thy Prelates, thou oughtest not to trust thine own judgement, thou oughtest to captivate it in matters of

Faith, and that it was better to believe with a holy simplicity, then question with a proud curiositie? Couldest thou be ignorant that the devils, and all hereticks after them had taken the same pretext of Scripture onely to colour their malice, and that with passages which had a fairer shew and appearance then those of thy Ministers? and yet they who followed them are miserably damned.

§. 14.

Open, shine eyes, worthy Nobility; open thy eyes, poor beguiled people, at least to the wonderfull and heavy judgements of God which thou hast so long shut to thy duty. See and consider that the last verdict and sentence of this unhappy Sect is already written in heaven, and that it must at last yield and fall to nothing as other heresies have done. O Nobility why dost thou look for clearer

and more manifest proofs of God's will? I addresse not these lines to *Epicurian* Sectaries that have no other Religion but their bellies, because they have moulded their soules merely of flesh and bloud. Neither doe I speak here to the factious Sectaries that will appear like Lords amongst the people, because the onely God they have is their fortune and greatnesse. Nor lastly do I direct my speech to passionate ministers, to the spirits of some doating obstinate old women, nor to a bruitish or enraged people, because they have wilfully bereaved themselves of all common sense and reason. I speak to thee O Nobility, I speak to you persons of quality, unto you Ministers, who have yet a vein of generositie, sense and judgement remaining. I speak to you O Poor people, if you love to be guided by reason. What can hinder you from returning to the bosome of the [redacted] Catholick Church, Roman

 which

which ceaſeth not to ſtretch her armes and open her heart to your obedience and ſubmiſſion? Are you yet afraid that infidels will blame you of inconſtancy in changing of your Religion? know you not that there is onely vice and errour to which we muſt want conſtancy? Why ſhould you bluſh at a humane weakneſſe, and not at withſtanding truth? Was it a blemiſh in Saint *Paul* to become an Apoſtle of a Perſecutor? a blemiſh in *Conſtantine*, of a heatheniſh infidel to become a Chriſtian? a blemiſh to *Clouis* the firſt Chriſtian King of *France*, to be converted and drawn to Chriſtianity by a woman? a blemiſh to *Henry* the great to become Catholick after he had been an enemy of our Religion? Finally, was it a blemiſh to ſo many learned Proteſtant Doctours and very noble perſons who are returned to the Religion of their fore-fathers? It is a humane thing to

to fail, but willfully to perſiſt in his faults is a mere diabolical vice. Let us impute the many falls that have happened, to the malice of the age, but let us not grudge God the converſion of ſoules, which are the works of his hands. It belongs but to enraged ſpirits to bury themſelves in the tombe of deſpair, and think that dying for their *chymeras* they ſhall encreaſe the Martyrologies of the *Lutherans* and Anabaptiſts. Are you afraid leaſt it be ſaid that you follow the courſe of the times and not the light of your conſcience? what matters it if the children of darkneſſe judge ill of the children of light? Did ever the ſun bluſh for not being lookt upon wiſhfully by owles and batts? know you not that Saint *Ambroſe* ſaith that all this lifes happineſs conſiſts in three things; in bringing the appetite under ſubjection to reaſon, the eſtimate and rate of humane things to the judge-

ment of God, and businesses to the occasions that are incident. Who could justly blame you for having submitted wilfull obstinacie to moderation, humane judgement to divine Law, and for having followed rather innumerable learned and conscientious men of all ages, then a handfull of proud and rebellious spirits? We have above brute beasts the Resurrection of the body, and above the devils repentance. All good soules are capable of being changed into better, there is none but deviliſh spirits that will hereafter make a trade of living in rage and dying in shame and ignominie. Were it possible that the commodities of this world, the conditions and temporal fortunes should as yet keep you back? what can you hope more of this Sect forsaken by God and men? though she should promise unto you mountains of gold, ought you for a false and deceitfull representation of honours or goods

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to yield and deliver your ſoules to eternal pains, and render your memorie hatefull to all men living? Perchance you apprehend the rigorous proceedings of an unnatural father, the fury of a husband, the failing of women, the inſolencies of baſe and ſervile ſoules? And if it were neceſſary in the beginning of your converſion to ſuffer ſomewhat, where will you make ſome proof and tryal of the character of Chriſtianity if not in the combats of patience? But above all take heed with all prudence of the greateſt illuſion that could creep into a humane ſpirit; to wit, of perſwading your ſelf that ſuffering for Hereſie you endure for juſtices ſake. It is the laſt ſnare the ſpirit of lyes will uſe to intangle you with, he will not faile to repreſent unto you in the confuſion and low ebbe of Proteſtancy, that the time is come wherein God means to ſever the chaff from the good corn, to part the

true

true children from the unlawfull and base-born, that the fornace is kindled to try the bretheren of gold and lead, that it is now the Lord's warlike colours are to be worn, Faith is to be sealed with the signet of tribulation, and a thousand such things. He will tell you all that can be said to a true Martyr, and will inflame the very bloud of your veins with desires of banishment, of chains and persecutions soothing you therein with a pretext of sanctity. He will infect you with so furious a vanity, that being in the high-way to hell you will take your self to be amongst the Angelicall quires. Let not those unhappy deceits beguile you, & never think such actions to be true marks of a sincere piety. Histories are full of enraged deaths, like to that which your thought figures to her self; all the most brutish Hereticks have had the same spirit which Satan doth ordinarily breath into them with the spirit of errour & lyes.

lyes. Behold in *Lucian* the wretched *Peregrinus*, he had been a Christian, and from Christian he became Heretick, from Heretick he turns an absolute Renegate, and in that great abyss of crimes and disorders, charmed as it were with the conceit of a most imaginary sanctity, he resolved of his own accord to burn himself alive in a full Assembly of all *Greece* thinking to imitate our Martyrs, and get an immortal Trophie to his false constancy. A prudent and skilfull Physician that visited him in a sickneſſe bad him have a little patience if he were weary of his life, for his body promised him no long life, but he replyed that his intention was not to dye a popular death, and therefore being cured he made this fair invitation to all that had a mind to see him dye by fire such a certain day. He did not fail to meet at the place appointed, and to make a funeral speech to his praise, whereof *Lucian* heard

heard some words; there he said that having lived *Hercules*-like, he would dye after the fashion of *Hercules*, and that in so doing he should infinitely oblige mankind. He thought that some would have hindered him, but when he saw that some did excite him to dispatch quickly the businesse, the pale colours seized on his face, and he would perhaps have shrunk back, but that vanity had already engaged him too far. After he had caused a great pile of wood to be raised, he went about midnight accompanied with numbers of Cynick Philosophers that carried Torches to the place where he was to execute that Tragical folly. When he came there and the fire was kindled, he stopt a while before it, then asking for some Frankincense he cast some grains thereof into the same, saying, O gods of my ancestours receive me, and that being said he leapt into the flames, which

which begun to conſume him in this world that he might eternally be tormented in the next. All which ſhewes you cleerly that we ought not to liſten unto thoſe fool-hardy ſpirits who maintain that death it ſelf is to be undergone in defence of a chimera, and who eſteem ſuch a reſolution to be a mark of the true Religion; for the ſpirit of darkneſſe having poſſeſſed a ſoul with infidelity, poureth into it by the ſame meanes the frantick phancies which make it believe, that thus dying, it will become moſt bleſſed and immortal. Seek as much as you can your glory in humility, in obedience, in ſubmiſſion of ſpirit to lawfull powers, and be ſure that there and no where elſe is the true and onely way to truth.

§. 15.

In the name of God weigh at leaſure theſe Conſiderations which would

would deserve a whole volume, and since you are convinced by reason kick no longer against the goad; goe no more about, to forge difficulties, nor say, how shall I put this in execution, what means have I to do it, what will such and such say, what will our whole side say in general? Must I confesse I have erred? and a thousand other thoughts which are true illusions. You shall no sooner set your foot in the true Catholick Church with so many men of note lately converted, but all these phantasies will vanish, you shall live in peace of conscience, and shall receive before God glory immortal.

F I N I S.